

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Siam

DATE DISTR. 10 March 1949

SUBJECT Siamese Navy Demands in Current Negotiations
with the Army

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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

During recent negotiations between the Army and the Navy following the disturbances brought on by the 26 February attempted coup d'etat, the Navy presented 14 points, the gist of which follows.

1. The draft constitution is a danger to the principles of the 1932 Coup d'Etat and must not be promulgated. The provisional constitution* is also to be renounced. The original 1932 constitution is to be modified to provide two houses in Parliament, and half of the members of the Senate are to be appointed.
2. Luang Pibul has agreed to these points, but he is concerned about the means of implementing them without disturbing international relations. There is a good possibility that Parliament will be recalled to provide for the election of a new constituent assembly to draft a new constitution along agreed principles. Some Army officers, Royal Air Force officers and Navy officers, above and including the rank of major general (and rear admiral), are petitioning the Supreme State Council not to promulgate the draft constitution**.
3. The negotiations also provide for the granting of amnesty to those involved in the current coup d'etat attempt and to those involved in the 1 October 1948 abortive attempted counter-coup***. Luang Pibul effected a compromise, promising amnesty after an official court decision.
4. There is a provision in the negotiations for an investigation into the deaths of Major Bhon Indradat and Police Colonel Banchongsak Chippensuk****. The Navy has demanded that the investigation also include the deaths of Nai Thong-In, Nai Chamlong, Nai Thawin and Dr. Tong Pleo****. Vice Admiral Luang Nawa Vichitr, Commander in Chief of the Royal Fleet, is to act as chairman of the investigation.
5. The Navy considers a cabinet reshuffle necessary, and regards the Ministers of Defense, Foreign Affairs, Justice and Interior as incompetent. This point has been readily accepted by Luang Pibul and the Army*****. The Navy was offered three of these posts, but Naval representatives declined on the grounds that Naval prestige might be jeopardized, and that the Navy

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prefers to remain outside of politics.

6. The only real obstacle to complete understanding between the Navy and the Army is the Navy demand that the Army be reorganized, and that all officers involved in the 9 November 1947 Coup d'Etat be dismissed. In return, the Navy agrees to discharge all members of the Navy who are regarded as undesirable because of meddling in politics. This was the basis of Rear Admiral Luang Polasin Thawanat's order to "liquidate" Lieutenant Vajarachai Chaisiddhivej during the post-26 February disturbances. This shooting, however, was prevented by marines.
7. The Navy is even prepared to retire Rear Admiral Taharn Khamhiran and to shoot Admiral Luang Sangworn Yuthakit, if the Army insists, but the Army must immediately discharge their men. The Army's response is that this is not possible under present circumstances, but that the discharges will be effected when the current situation returns to "normalcy."

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- * ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment. This has reference to 9 November 1947 when the 1932 constitution was abolished "by royal command" and a new one enforced in its place. The so-called provisional constitution was to remain in effect until the promulgation of the new constitution which was drawn up by a 40-man constituent assembly.

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- ** ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment. For details in connection with the opposition to the draft constitution, see ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment. The acceptance of this point seems logical in light of the report in ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ that a faction of the November Coup group, of which Khun Chamnong Phumiwet was said to be an outstanding member, was dissatisfied and wanted to force the resignations of Foreign Affairs Minister Pridithepong Devakul, Justice Minister Phra Manuphan Wimolsat, and Deputy Interior Minister Nai Liang Chayakan, among others.

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